

equivalent of 1.5 percent of reserve. And the case is, I agree with the Governor, there is going to be further deterioration. And the way that you account for that is by carrying a higher reserve, and this doesn't. The other thing the amendment does is this, because it strikes all amendments that were adopted prior. So the half cent commencing in January, that goes for motor vehicles, would continue to be deposited to the Highway Trust Fund. The issue was raised the other day, which has now been sunset, but the issue was raised to me that the purpose of the sunset was to reopen the argument next session of transferring the State Patrol to the gas tax, which is a basic policy change that seems to me just as well be considered here. There is no question, as I indicated earlier on Senator Miller's motion, that contrary to the words used last week, this is not a windfall. This is not a windfall. This is...does only one thing, and that will tend to replace the lost revenue that is now being experienced by the cities and counties because of the declining consumption of highway motor fuel, together with the declining receipts on motor vehicle sales taxes, if I remember last month's correctly. But collectively it is about 3.2 percent below, I believe, from what was anticipated. When I say that consumption is down, that is not projections. Consumption of gasoline is down 10.83 percent from this January, compared to actual consumption a year ago. It is dealing with actual to actual, nothing to do with projections. So the purpose is the same purpose it served, the sales tax served all through the seventies. All through the 1970s the only growth that we had, for the maintenance of the highway, streets, and roads of this state, was the sales tax on motor vehicles. It has historically been dedicated for that purpose since 1969. There is an obvious need for the maintenance of roads. I have a chart that shows the growth that has occurred since 1974 in the Highway Trust Fund, and it is just a little bit more than flat, just a little bit of growth. You look at the growth in the General Fund and it goes up at about a 45, 55 degree angle. But in the case of roads the Highway Trust Fund, which goes to cities and counties of the state, is virtually flat. What growth has occurred essentially was the growth that occurred when the tax rate on gasoline was increased together with what growth has occurred on the sales tax on motor vehicles. I would urge the adoption of the amendment. It retains the concept. The need is obvious. It is there. It is to maintain the level of revenue to the cities and counties. And I'm stressing the cities and counties because the state could make up the difference with the variable. The cities and counties do not have that option. Someone may well point out that the city